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PD-990079

CLAIMS

1.-39. (CANCELLED)

40. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method for receiving a subscriber renewal notice comprising:

- (a) receiving, in a set top box, broadcast signals through a tuner of the set top box;
- (b) enabling a presentation device connected to the set top box to display the broadcast signals;
- (c) automatically connecting to the Internet using a communication module of the set top box without the user requesting the connection, wherein the communication module is different than the tuner; and
- (d) receiving a subscriber renewal notice over the connection to the Internet.

41. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 40, wherein the subscriber renewal notice is traditionally broadcast via satellite, the method further comprising receiving broadcast information that utilizes satellite bandwidth no longer consumed by the subscriber renewal notice.

42. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 40, wherein the subscriber renewal notice comprises service provider facility data.

43. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 40, further comprising establishing a secure electronic connection with a server through the connection to the Internet, wherein the subscriber renewal notice is received through the secure electronic connection.

44. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 40, further comprising:
receiving purchase information, for a good or service purchased by a user, wherein the purchase information was obtained through the user communicating with the set top box;
storing the purchase information for the good or service in the set top box; and
transmitting the purchase information from the set top box to a server through the connection to the Internet.

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45. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 44, wherein the purchase information is stored in a smart card.

46. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 40, wherein the automatically connecting to the Internet comprises:

receiving a local phone number in the set top box;
automatically dialing the local phone number, without the user requesting a connection, using the communication module, wherein the communication module is a modem; and
establishing the connection to the Internet through a computer that answers the dialed local phone number.

47. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 46, wherein the local phone number is associated with an Internet service provider.

48. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 40, wherein the automatically connecting comprises:

determining if an Internet connection is currently established;
if an Internet connection is currently established, automatically obtaining a new transmission control protocol/internet protocol (TCP/IP) connection through the communication module using the established Internet connection.

49. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A system for receiving a subscriber renewal notice:

- (a) a subscriber renewal notice;
- (b) a set top box configured to:
 - (i) receive broadcast signals through a tuner;
 - (ii) enable a presentation device to display the broadcast signals;
 - (iii) automatically connect to the Internet using a communication module of the set top box without the user requesting the connection, wherein the communication module is different than the tuner;
 - (iv) receive the subscriber renewal notice over the connection to the Internet.

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50. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The system of claim 49, wherein the subscriber renewal notice is traditionally broadcast via satellite, wherein the set top box is further configured to receive broadcast information that utilizes satellite bandwidth no longer consumed by the subscriber renewal notice.

51. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The system of claim 49, wherein the subscriber renewal notice comprises service provider facility data.

52. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The system of claim 49, wherein the set top box is further configured to establish a secure electronic connection with a server through the connection to the Internet, wherein the subscriber renewal notice is received through the secure electronic connection.

53. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The system of claim 49, wherein the set top box is further configured to:

receive purchase information, for a good or service purchased by a user, wherein the purchase information was obtained through the user communicating with the set top box;
store the purchase information for the good or service in the set top box; and
transmit the purchase information from the set top box to a server through the connection to the Internet.

54. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The system of claim 53, wherein the purchase information is stored in a smart card.

55. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The system of claim 49, wherein the set top box is configured to automatically connect to the Internet by:

receiving a local phone number in the set top box;
automatically dialing the local phone number, without the user requesting a connection, using the communication module, wherein the communication module is a modem; and
establishing the connection to the Internet through a computer that answers the dialed local phone number.

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56. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The system of claim 55, wherein the local phone number is associated with an Internet service provider.

57. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The system of claim 49, wherein the set top box is configured to automatically connect by:

determining if an Internet connection is currently established;

if an Internet connection is currently established, automatically obtaining a new transmission control protocol/internet protocol (TCP/IP) connection through the communication module using the established Internet connection.

58. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An article of manufacture for receiving a subscriber renewal notice comprising:

means for a set top box connectable to a presentation device to receive broadcast signals through a tuner;

means for the set top box to enable the presentation device to display the broadcast signals;

means for the set top box to automatically connect to the Internet using a communication module of the set top box without a user requesting the connection, wherein the communication module is different than the tuner; and

means for the set top box to receive a subscriber renewal notice over the connection to the Internet.

59. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of manufacture of claim 58, wherein the subscriber renewal notice is traditionally broadcast via satellite, wherein the article of manufacture further comprises means for the set top box to receive broadcast information that utilizes satellite bandwidth no longer consumed by the subscriber renewal notice.

60. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of manufacture of claim 58, wherein the subscriber renewal notice comprises service provider facility data.

61. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of manufacture of claim 58, further comprising means for the set top box to establish a secure electronic connection with a server

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through the connection to the Internet, wherein the subscriber renewal notice is received through the secure electronic connection.

62. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of manufacture of claim 58, further comprising:

means for the set top box to receive purchase information, for a good or service purchased by a user, wherein the purchase information was obtained through the user communicating with the set top box;

means for the set top box to store the purchase information for the good or service in the set top box; and

means for the set top box to transmit the purchase information from the set top box to a server through the connection to the Internet.

63. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of manufacture of claim 62, wherein the purchase information is stored in a smart card.

64. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of manufacture of claim 58, wherein the means for the set top box to automatically connect to the Internet comprises:

means for the set top box to receive a local phone number in the set top box;

means for the set top box to automatically dial the local phone number, without the user requesting a connection, using the communication module, wherein the communication module is a modem; and

means for the set top box to establish the connection to the Internet through a computer that answers the dialed local phone number.

65. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of manufacture of claim 64, wherein the local phone number is associated with an Internet service provider.

66. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of manufacture of claim 58, wherein the means for the set top box to automatically connect comprises:

means for the set top box to determine if an Internet connection is currently established; and

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if an Internet connection is currently established, means for the set top box to automatically obtain a new transmission control protocol/internet protocol (TCP/IP) connection through the communication module using the established Internet connection.